

Eric M. - Conservator for Mother

A year ago, Eric became the conservator for his mother because she could no longer handle her own money. The mother lives by herself in a small condominium in downtown Anchorage. She was confused by changes in banking and credit card procedures and was not paying her bills on time. She'd also been persuaded to make some large charity and political contributions which she couldn't afford.

It took some time for Eric to straighten out his mother's finances. In addition to her banking and credit cards, her insurance billing was disorganized also, but after some months he had gained a clear picture of her affairs.

Using the Letter of Conservatorship authorizing his conservatorship, he established new accounts in his mother's name with himself as conservator. He also contacted her service providers and directed that bills be sent to him. He arranged to become the representative payee for her Social Security payment. He did his original research for this online.

The mother had not filed her taxes for two years, so Eric arranged for a CPA to work on them. She was owed a refund. He will file taxes for her in the future.

Eric maintains a separate file for his mom in the place where he keeps his other records. He has set it up simply. The file has folders for bills that are due, bills that have been paid, canceled

checks, matters related to taxes, and matters related to her condominium. He keeps copies of all paperwork related to the conservatorship case. This includes copies of the court order that established the conservatorship, and the Letter of Conservatorship that states what his powers are. He occasionally needs these when working with someone new, to prove his authority to handle her financial affairs.

The mother is still active in her church and some other social groups. She likes to shop for gifts for her grandchildren. Her son gives her a small amount of cash each week and has arranged for a limited amount on a credit card. This arrangement is something they both feel is working. Eric represents her with her condominium association and now arranges for any work that needs to be done inside the condominium. At this point, the conservatorship arrangement is working well. After discussion with her son and some trusted friends, the mother also has decided to give Eric durable power of attorney.

Study Points

- Eric keeps his mother's records in a separate file that is easy for him to work with.
- He saw that he needed help with the taxes.

- He respects his mother's independence by arranging for her to have both cash and credit for her regular needs and for other shopping, but he is still protecting her.
- Together the mother and her son are further protecting her through the power of attorney.